

Catherine Campbell Murdoch
and
David William Hicken

Few people are born into the world with the qualities of spirit that came with Catherine Campbell Murdoch, always called Kate, born on November 15, 1864, in Heber City, Utah. She was the second child of John Murray Murdoch and Isabella Crawford, John M.'s second wife. Kate, named Catherine Campbell after her mother's best friend, was eighteen months younger than her sister Maggie (Margaret Ann), and the love between the two sisters endured beyond Maggie's death in 1904 until Kate's death on March 6, 1945.

Kate was a family person. The members of her own family were always seen by her through heavy veils of love, and they could do little or no wrong in her eyes. And she had room in her heart to love many, many people.

It was Maggie to whom Kate spoke in the days before her death. "Who am I talking to? Where are your eyes, girl? Aunt Mag is sitting right there in that chair beside you!" But Maggie was probably no dearer to her than Jock (John Murray Murdoch--the sixth child; or Brig; or Jim; or Tressa (Isabella Crawford Murdoch--the seventh child); or any of the others. A visit from Thomas Murdoch, Uncle Tom, was a delight she looked forward to for days. Tom was a child of Ann Steel Murdoch, John M.'s first wife. He was two years younger than Kate. She said once that she didn't know until she was "a girl grown that Tom was a half-brother." And perhaps he was favored even a bit over those boys born of her own mother.

A visit from any of her relatives was an occasion for cleaning and baking and hoping for a long stay if the relative was from out of town, and if a family member who lived in town came for less than a day-long visit, she would see them out the door with regret. Kate had been reared in the Mormon way--people provided the main entertainment and amusement for themselves in the mountain-bound communities like Heber City, where Kate was to live all of her life. What others did, how they did it, and who said what, were all fascinating subjects for conversation--not exactly gossip, for there was always compassion and understanding and humor in the talk. And if the individual's behavior was questionable, as it could often be in that strict moral climate of Mormon Utah, the subject was given the benefit of the doubt. "Give him the benefit of the doubt," Kate would say. "You weren't there. You don't really know what happened. And if you had been there, you'd have probably done the very same thing. People mostly do what they have to do."

Kate was a gently mischievous child, too loving to



HICKEN FAMILY— A turn-of-the century photo of Kate Hicken and children. Twins, Zoa and Zola, elder son, Rodney, younger son Rollo, and holding baby daughter, Dora.

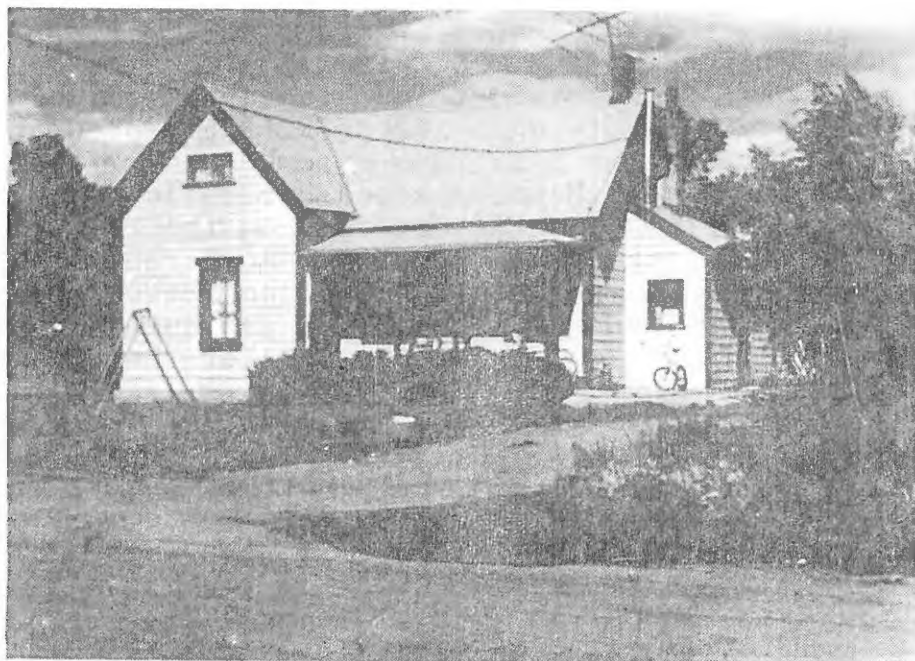
This is a picture of Kate Hicken and family while David W. Hicken was on his mission in the Southern States Mission, 1902-1903. Ward and Ann were born after he came home.

were dulled by old age and ill health, her arms were ready to hold a child with an earache or a heartache.

On her deathbed, two of her small great granddaughters were visiting, and while the granddaughter took a turn caring for Mama, she heard the little voices in the kitchen and asked, "Whose children are they? Bring them in here." "But we thought they might disturb you." "Never, never. It is always so good to hear the young ones play. Please don't keep them from me."

To Mama, life was a gift filled with people she loved, worked for, gave to, protected, and encouraged--most of all encouraged. If you were a relative or friend of Catherine Campbell Murdoch Hicken's, you were wonderful, accomplished, beloved, and welcomed. And because of this, Mama Kate didn't really die in 1945 at the age of eighty. She just slipped into another room, from where she calls out to us, "Oh, my, you are doing just fine. I'm so proud of you, and I can hardly wait until you can find the time to come and stay awhile with me. Our door is never locked; if we're not here when you come, just come right in and make yourself at home. I've just gone out to chop that rooster's head off so we can have chicken and dumplings for dinner!"

(This profile of Catherine Campbell Murdoch Hicken was written by her granddaughter, Rodello Hicken Hunter Calkins.) Copyright 1979 by Rodello Hunter.)



"House of Many Rooms." Hicken Home--Heber, Utah.